

Rare Plants of Louisiana



Lithospermum incisum - narrow-leaved puccoon Borage Family (Boraginaceae)

Rarity Rank: S1/G5

	1	2	3	4	5
State					
Global					
	imperiled		rare		secure



Range: Western two-thirds of the US

Recognition:

- Perennial with one or more erect stems from a taproot, to 30 - 40 cm tall
- Stem leaves many, linear or narrowly lanceolate, 1 – 4 cm long by 0.4 – 1 cm wide, having sharp stiff appressed (= strigose) hairs; leaves gradually reduced in size upwardly along the stem
- Morphology changes with plant age, with the basal leaves disappearing and the plants becoming more branched and bushy as the spring and summer progress
- Early flowers sterile, yellow, trumpet-shaped, with the edges of the petals crinkled (later flowers fertile, minute, hidden among bracts in the inflorescence)
- Fruit is a small, shiny white, porcelain-like nutlet that is sometimes pitted

Flowering Time: mid March: early, more showy, but sterile flowers; late spring to early summer: minute fertile flowers hidden among leafy bracts in the inflorescence

Light Requirement: Full sun – part shade

Wetland Indicator Status: Does not occur in wetlands

Habitat:

Coastal zone occurrences are on beach ridges in Cameron Parish with shelly-sand substrate. Interior Louisiana occurrences are from calcareous prairies.

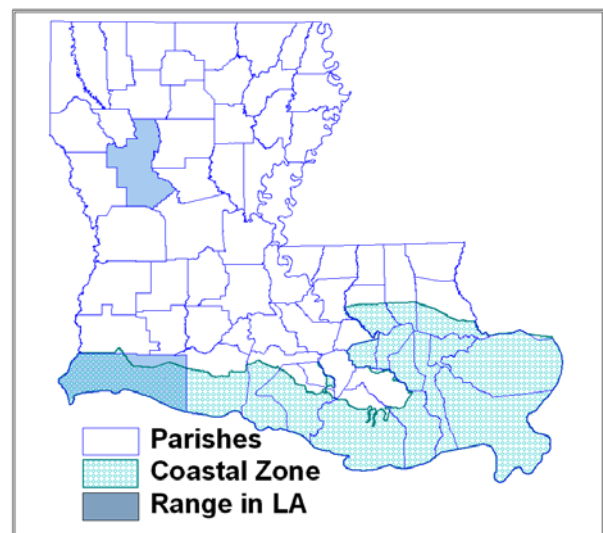
Threats:

- Invasive species, e.g. Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) which can shade out and smother *Lithospermum incisum*
- Excessive grazing/trampling by cattle

Beneficial Management Practices:

Periodic mowing or burning to maintain open conditions

LA River Basins: Mermentau, Calcasieu, Sabine, Red River



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Lithospermum incisum with “early flowers” in mowed area in trail on sandy substrate with abundant fine shell fragments, Cameron Parish. This is the only recently seen station in the coastal zone, with other Cameron reports being 30-40 years old.

References:

- Allen, C. M. 1997. Identification and distribution of Boraginaceae and Polygalaceae in Louisiana. *Proc. Louisiana Acad. Sci.* 60: 20-29.
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